

Who Killed Guru Tegh Bahadur ?

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In the Sikh contemporary records of the highest credibility and in the consistent Sikh tradition and chronicles as well as in the Sikh group-memory, Aurangzib is shown as having personally ordered the public execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur at Delhi on the 11th November, 1675. The execution was ordered by the emperor after a number of interviews with the Guru in which the fundamental principles of the Mughal state-policy came under discussion, as to (1) whether the ultimate Truth could be encased in verbal formulae, (2) whether the creed-formula of Islam did so encase it justifying its claim to being the final and exclusive deposit of Truth, (3) whether this claim could be and should be imposed through terror and temptations, *ash-shara' tahtut-saif*, and (4) whether a totalitarian, altogether dissent-free society was divinely pre-determined as the Will of God. To all these profound and rootal questions the reply of the Guru is recorded as having been in the negative and consequently, Aurangzib clinched the issue by formally inviting the Guru to embrace Islam. This the Guru declined, thus attracting the penalty of death according to the basic state-laws of Islam : *amā al-qatl wa amā al-Islām*.

2. These historically momentous occurrences, demonstrably of the greatest possible

significance and relevance to human situation—more so today than ever before— took place when Guru Gobind Singh, the son of the martyr Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, was of nine years of age and throughout these occurrences, the Guru's House was in constant and uninterrupted touch, through carefully arranged intelligence and communications, with Guru Tegh Bahadur and what passed on at Delhi.

3. All this is described and consistently recorded in detail in the Sikh chronicles, as it is embedded in the Sikh group-memory.

4. Guru Gobind Singh himself, about whose altogether reliable testimony and credibility, no reasonable doubts can be raised, tells us in *Bacittarnātak* (1686), that his father,

“broke the pitcher of his mortal
frame on the head of the Delhi emperor”

—not “on the head” of the Mughal State or that of the ruling race, the ‘Turks’, but ‘on the head of’ Aurangzib himself. Those who are conversant with Hindi-Punjabi idiom well understand that Guru Gobind Singh's expression : *thikar phor dilis sir*, clearly implies that it was Aurangzib who personally, not through an order issued

through official channels from a distant place, had Guru Tegh Bahadur executed at Delhi where he was present then on the 11th November, 1675. Guru Gobind Singh further records that the immediate cause of his father's martyrdom arose out of Guru Tegh Bahadur having directly and personally espoused and taken up the cause of the Hindu religion then placed under gradual interdiction by Aurangzib and that the confrontation between the Guru and the emperor did not involve a direct Sikh cause, *tilak janjū rākhā prabhu tākā*. We are further told in the *Bacittarnatak* that the legal issue of Islamic jurisprudence was clinched against the Guru when he flatly declined to display a miracle such as would support his implied claim to independent prophethood, on the ground that miracle-working was undignified for a man of religion: *nātak cetak karat kukājā, prabhu logan kau āvat lājā*.

Bhai Santokh Singh, *Mahākavi*, in his *Gurupratāpsūryodey* (1846) clearly tells us that *adham naurange kāran kīnā*, 'it was the unspeakably evil Aurangzib who had Guru Tegh Bahadur executed.'

5. During the last few decades, however, a new discipline called, 'historical research' has swept over India, giving its contemporary historians access to sources of information hitherto not available, such as many sided manuscript-material, techniques of interdisciplinary comparative studies such as archeology, inscriptional matter, numismatic

evidence and C-14 tests. This has vastly extended the frontiers of and illuminated historical knowledge, cleared it of its obscurantist cowwebs, and has furnished scholars with technics and insights of interpretational methods that were not generally available earlier and that enable them to make historical studies more objectively and scientifically.

6. But, as is not uncommon, new techniques and new tools bring in new pitfalls, those of inadequacy of full understanding of their true significance and scope, and prejudices and biases born of erroneous assumptions, and last but not the least, lopsided partisanship resulting from absence of totality of vision. The recent restructuring of Sikh history, in particular, has suffered most grievously in recent times at the hands of non-Sikh and Sikh historians both. Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar, for instance, forgetting altogether that the true source-material of Sikh history lies deposited in Sikh writings, sacred and secular, preserved in the Gurmukhi script and north-Indian vernaculars of both of which he was blissfully ignorant, as he was innocent of any comprehension of the basic rule of interpretation that the only valid interpretation is the auto-interpretation to which hetero-interpretation is no more than impudence, has gone on a spree in his writings on Aurangzib by speaking of the Sikh prophets and personalities as if they are criminal probationers before Sarkar, the warden.

magistrate. He speaks of the 'corruption of the original, Sikh doctrine' and 'degradation' of its spirituality by Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh in particular, and severely reprimands them for hiring services of professional Pathan mercenaries for body-guard and self-defence purposes, without realising that Guru Hargobind put on the sword belt and recruited a body-guard platoon as specifically asked by his father Guru Arjan and Guru Gobind Singh, in everything he did, including the inauguration of the Khalsa, swore by Guru Nanak. Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar should have realised that the ten Sikh Gurus, one after the other, were to be deemed as more reliable authorities on what the true implications of the original spiritual teachings of Guru Nanak are and if they resorted to political activities and took cognisance of the power-game around them it must have been because such were the true teachings of Guru Nanak, and that to judge Sikhism and its historical evaluation by standards of vague Jain and Hindu teachings and prejudices about *ahimsā* and the Hindu imperative of utter separation of this world from the next, is just hetero-interpretation, like a goldsmith trying to test the excellence of a rose-flower by rubbing it against his touchstone. Nor did Sarkar, in his self-assurance, pause to take due note of the fact that in 17th and 18th century India, professional mercenaries soldiers were an integral part of the political activity and participation in the power-game, there being no moral or spiritual issues involved.

Accepted as a trend-setter, in relation to Sikh history, Sarkar has given rise and lent respectability to certain extremely stupid guide-lines for his contemporary historio-graphers that have played havoc not only in the recently reconstructed Sikh history but have thrown the Sikh writers and teachers of History altogether off their balance.

7. These 'guidelines,' accepted as axiomatic, have just to be stated precisely to show their extremely pernicious character and their impermissibility in objective and scientific historiography. Some of these 'guidelines', or more correctly, gross prejudices are these: (a) Almost exclusively, the reliable material about Sikh history is to be found in the contemporary Persian records, (b) Sikh records in Gurmukhi script and Sikh racial memory, consistent and continuous, are irrelevant and unreliable, to be noted, if at all, as secondary corroborative and supplemental material, (c) Sikh prophets, the Gurus, are to be estimated just as ordinary citizens of the Mughal empire whose words and deeds are to be tested and evaluated on the scale of contemporary official values and judgements, (d) Sikhism is not an autonomous prophetic world-religion, distinguishable from the Hindu religious tradition and, therefore, it is legitimate to judge and evaluate it under Hindu category and norms of judgement and thus to condemn and approve of it, finally and conclusively, (e) The writings of 17th and early 18th century European adventurers

conclusive even when they are demonstrably self-stultifying.

8. It is in this grotesque frame-work that the new Sikh history is being written by many of the non-Sikh and Sikh historiographers as a result of which the entire foundation-work of Sikhism and the Sikh history is being eroded into, and unless this trend is checked it cannot but have disastrous consequences for Sikhism and the Sikhs.

9. It is Sarkar who is, more than anybody else singly, responsible for boosting up Persian records of Muslim historiographers; as the unerring sources of the historical fact. Sarkar's prejudice in this respect almost parallels the claim made about the *Mahābhārata*, that, 'what is there in the world, it is here in this book also, and if it is not here, it is not there too', *yad ihāsti tad anyatra yanne hāsti na tat kvācit*.

10. Aurangzib and Guru Tegh Bahadur are inextricably bound up together in history. There are three or four major Persian records relating to this period. Aurangzib ascended the Mughal throne in August, 1658 and died in 1707. After a rule of ten years, he felt that he had completely mastered his dominions as the undisputed ruler of the country and he felt justified in pursuing an all-out policy of converting India into an orthodox *Sunni* Muslim state and to "bring the lives of the people into closer accord with the teachings of Islam" (Edwards

and Garret, *Mughal Rule in India*, Delhi, 1956, P. 114). In the same year he forbade writing of all history, so that, in the darkness of this total news blackout, he could systematically and ruthlessly root out Hinduism and the Hindu way of life as other forms of dissidence, such as Sikhism and non-Sunni Islam. In 1669 he ordered demolition of all places of worship of non-Muslims and closure of their teaching seminaries. In 1675 he had Guru Tegh Bahadur, who had formally assumed the responsibilities of protecting Hinduism, publicly executed at Delhi. In 1679 he reimposed the oppressive *jezieh* on Hindus, with the result, as Manucci tells us (*Storia de Mogor*, P. II. 234), that "many Hindus who were unable to pay turned Mohammadans to obtain relief from the insults of the collectors." In 1704 he ordered killing or capture of Guru Gobind Singh and destruction and diaspora of the Khalsa. In 1707 he died, leaving behind, not a monolithic, dissent-free *Sunni* India, but a Mughal empire shaken in its very roots, a fissirostral government and a resurgent Maratha Hinduism as well as the Khalsa, "a deadly coiled snake in the striking posture," *pecideh mār*, as Guru Gobind Singh referred to it in his *Zafarnāme*.

11. Of this pregnantly black period of Indian history, the first contemporary Persian record, that we have is that of Mirza Mohd Kazim, the official history writer of Aurangzib who recorded events of the first ten years of his reign. It makes no mention whatsoever of the public execution of the world famous *Sūfi* saint, Sarmad, whom Aurangzib got murdered during the first year

of his reign for possessing and expressing religious views contrary to those of the fanatical Aurangzib. Then when Aurangzib totally banned all history writing, someone secretly prepared the folios, called *Muntakhabul-lubāb*, under the pseudonym, Khafi Khan, which covers the period, almost upto the demise of Aurangzib, and in this voluminous record also, there is neither any mention of Sarmad's execution, nor of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, although Khafi Khan thought it important enough to record that during those days some cattle-grazing boys, while playing at the game of *King and Subjects*, actually strangulated a playmate to death. After the passing away of Aurangzib, during the reign of Shah Alam I (1710) one Must'ad Khan, in his *Ma'asari Alamgiri*, recorded the history of 40 years of Aurangzib's reign from 1669 to 1707 and in this document also there is no mention of Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom or of Sarmad's execution. One Munshi Ghulam Hussain Khan wrote his *Sayyarul-matākhari* in which he recorded a general history of India of 1702-1786, describing the reigns of the last seven emperors of India and an account of the progress of the English in Bengal. We do not know who this Ghulam Hussain was, when he actually wrote his book, vaguely believed to have been written round about 1785, though there is no chronogramical support available to this guess. However, any original or otherwise authentic manuscript of this book is not there and it is not known under what circumstances he wrote it, the only certain thing about it being that it was first published in 1897. This Persian

record makes a mention of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, but not much reliability can be placed on the author's statements as they are demonstrably sketchy, grounded in bazar stories current long after the events. About Guru Tegh Bahadur, he tells us that (1) the Guru was ordered to be arrested by Aurangzib from Hasanabadal Camp on receiving news reports that the Guru was highly regarded by the public and attracted large numbers of people wherever he went, that (2) in fact all the men in the entourage of the Guru, from time to time, were godly, peace-loving people, unarmed and with no hostile intentions towards the state, that (3) the Governor of Lahore arrested the Guru as ordered by the emperor and that (4) the Guru was executed at Lahore with his body cut into four pieces and each piece hung at the four gates of the walls of Lahore, opening towards the four cardinal directions.

12. It is obvious that the writer of these cock and bull stories cannot be regarded any reliable source of information about the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur and also of many other events that he has presumed to record as history. But since he, presumably, wrote under the suggestion or orders of some British adventurer in India of those days, in the last decades of the 18th century, his book was translated into English by two British subalterns, one Reymond and the other John Briggs, published in London, in the thirties of the nineteenth century.

13. The second of these two gentlemen, Lieutenant John Briggs, for reasons best known to him, said in his "translation" that

Munshi Ghulam Hussain Khan has recorded that Guru Tegh Bahadur was a robber-chief who subsisted on "rapine and plunder," "forsaking all means of honest livelihood" and for this offence he was executed under warrant from the emperor. How this Briggs came to write his own fabrications, as *translation from Siyyarul-mutakharin*, through malice, inanity or inebriation, most probably all three combined, for malice towards the still-free Sikhs in India was a universal emotion in the minds of the British soldiery and inanity and inebriation was their national trait in India, is not clear; but the fact remains that ever since, this account of the martyr Guru has been accepted as authoritative and historically established by our modern historians, both Indians and non-Indians. Such are the high standards of 'scientific objectivity' that inspire our research scholars of History, particularly, in our Sikh Universities.

14. The latest of these research scholar happens to be the Head of the History Department of the Punjabi University at Patiala, Dr. Fauja Singh, who, in his thesis, published in the inaugural issue (1974) of the *Journal of Sikh Studies* sponsored by the Guru Nanak University, Amritsar, has said that, (a) it is Munshi Ghulam Hussain who says in the *Siyyarul-Mutakharin* that Guru Tegh Bahadur was a robber-chief subsisting on rapine and plunder, and that (b) the Guru was for these crimes, executed at Delhi as a highway robber and political criminal, and finally, that, (c) Aurangzib is neither responsible for this execution, nor was he present at Delhi in the winter of 1675.

15. Around these self-spun fictions Dr. Fauja Singh dishes out a pretty exciting story of how Guru Tegh Bahadur was, in reality, a pre-Marxian revolutionary espousing the cause of the exploited land-tillers and attempting to organise a Che Guevera-type premature insurrection in his self-assumed role of a class conscious midwife to revolution, in the course of which activities he was pounced upon and overtaken by the long arm of the law and brought to justice at Delhi by having his head chopped off in the Chandani Chowk. "Long live, Tegh Bahadur" or to be more exact, "Long live, Comrade Tyagmal," for, according to Dr. Fauja Singh, the Guru's real name, in all likelihood, was Tyagmal and Tegh Bahadur was only his assumed name in the best revolutionary tradition.

16. This is where our University research scholars of history have taken us to, through their allegiance to the precept that all that is true is recorded in the Persian manuscripts and all that goes under its guise, and that what does not accord with these manuscripts, and the subsequent fabrications thereof are beneath their contempt, to notice. Dr. Fauja Singh does not say so in so many words but the implied meanings, nuances and insinuations of his write-up are unmistakable. Dr. Fauja Singh, in his thesis, does not tell us, why he thinks so, but he takes it for granted that in November, 1675, Aurangzib was not present at Delhi. Since the emperor then was not at Delhi, the entire Sikh story including the testament of Guru Gobind Singh about a prolonged and most significant dialogue between the Guru and the emperor, before,

and leading to, the former's execution is shown as utterly imaginary and false and, by implication, such are the infirm and mendacious foundations upon which the superstructure of the epihany and evolution of Sikhism and the Sikh history has been raised.

17. Understandably, there have been anguished protests against this gratuitous and shameful distortion and perversion of the Sikh history and the Sikh doctrine, but these protests have been brushed aside by Dr. Fauja Singh and his supporters mostly Sikhs, as uncalled for, unjustified, subversive of 'academic freedom' and non-conducive to 'scientific research' in history. Such is the pitiful condition to which the hapless Sikhs have been reduced today !

18. Was Aurangzib not present in Delhi in Novembor, 1675 when Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed under imperial orders and is the consistent Sikh recorded tradition and unbroken group-memory altogether devoid of any hstorical truth ? This is the question we set out to consider of which question the foregoing merely forms a prologue.

19. Though Dr. Fauja Singh does not mention it, it is more than likely that he relies upon the chronology worked out by Sir Jadu nath Sarkar in his, *Aurangzib and his Times* (5 volumes) wherein it is stated that Aurangzib stayed at Hasan Abadal till his return to Delhi on 27th March, 1676 (p. III. 276) that is about 4½ months after the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur. If this computation

of Sarkar can be shown as untrustworthy there is nothing whatever to cast any doubts on the account of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur given by Guru Gobind Singh and other Sikh sources.

20. Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar's chronology is obviously based upon and derived from the Hijira dates given in the aforementioned Persian documents.

21. The Hijira era is a religious chronology commencing from the flight of Mohammad from Mecca to Medina (15 July, AD 622) and the following day, Friday, 16 July is equivalent to the 1st. of Moharram, A. H. 1. The year is a lunar one of 354 days and its primary functional use was and is determination and celebration of Muslim religious duties and celebrations, commencement of the fasting month, its termination and celebration of *Id* etc. but in Islamic societies, including India the era has been used for secular purposes also, inspite of complications arising out of its initial day always travelling backwards through the Julian Calendar of 365 days, thus making a complete circuit in 34 years. The reckonings derived from it have apparent intial points in A. D. 591, 593, and 600 though their real origin was in the 14th, 16th and 17th centuries. The emperor Akbar succeeded to the throne in February, A. D. 1556 in the Hijira year 963 which ran from 16th November 1555 to 3rd November 1556. In order to minimise, if not to obviate altogether, the confusion implicit in a lunar year for purposes of revenue administration which cannot but be based on a solar year to ensure that the crops maturations

and revenue-collections occur during the same period in a given year, Akbar replaced Hijira by the *Shamsi-san*, the solar years. This secular reform did away with a great deal of chronological confusion and multiplicity then prevalent in various parts of India in obvious attempts to co-ordinate, somehow, the true secular year, the solar year, with the Muslim religious lunar year and the era of the Hijira. This *shasmī-san* introduced by Akbar was intended to replace the *Fasali-san* of upper India, the *Vilāyatī san* of Orissa, the Bengali-*san* and the Maharashtar *Arabī san*. The initial days of all these *sans* or eras differed from place to place into which jungle of dates Akbar tried to introduce some kind of rational order, though this chronological jungle was, by no means, altogether cleared off. The magnitude and the complexity of the problem can best be appreciated by going through the details of the stupendous efforts that have, from the end of the 18th century to the beginning of the 20th century, been made by eminent Calendarists and Chronologists, beginning with the *Kalāsankalita* (1825) of Warren, *Useful Tables* (1834-1836) of Prinsep, *Chronology* (1866) of Cowassijee Patell and *Book of Indian Eras* (1883) of Cunningham, culminating in *Indian Calender* (1898) of Dikshit and *Epigraphia Indica* (1894) of Jacobi.

22. Aurangzib, quite early in his career, as the emperor, abruptly stopped rationalisation of the secular chronological confusion of India by re-introducing Hijira era and Lunar chronology into all official levels of Indian administration with the result that, for more

than half a century, the Mughal official records are vitiated chronologically, requiring expert known-how to make the dates given in our Persian records, ununderstandable to us. It is to be noted that Aurangzib, in this, had no other motive but that of religious fanaticism to change the entire face of India into a *Muslim* state and a *Sunni Muslim* society.

23. Sir Jadunath Sarkar has rendered a yeoman's service to the students of Indian history of this period by working out its Hijira Lunar dates into dates of the Julian solar calendar plausibly, but not always faultlessly.

24. There are inherent pitfalls which even Sarkar has not been able to escape.

25. Firstly, as we will show presently, the dates given in our Persian records by no means tally with each other, always, and thus we are obliged to search for an outside point of reference. Secondly, the fact cannot be overlooked that Khafi Khan and Must'ad Khan wrote under obvious and great disadvantages, the one, under Aurangzib's 'Emergency ordinances', so to speak, forbidding all recording of contemporary events, a total ban on historiography, and two, the utter non-availability of official records to those who, under difficult circumstances, wrote out their histories.

26. The dates of Hijira on which Sarkar had to work, are themselves impregnated with an element of uncertainty and also falsity such as every true Muslim would approve and accept as just and proper. For instance, if Aurangzib so wished, in demonstrable interest

of Islamic hegemony in India, that in the closing months of the year A. D. 1675, all records prepared or maintained by Muslims, must show that Aurangzib was *not* in Delhi, then such, indeed, would be the case though it would merely be a political truth and not a historical truth.

27. This is the true explanation of the variance between the Sikh chronological records which consistently show Aurangzib's presence in Delhi in November, 1675 and the other dates given by Khafi Khan and Must'ad Khan, of certain other events, for they would have us believe that no such thing as martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur at all took place in Delhi. These other dates refer to events of Aurangzib's march to Hasanabdal, his return to Delhi and his crushing of the *Satnāmī* insurgence.

28. These are the only dates available to Sarkar from which he has extracted and derived his own dates of the Julian calendar, according to which latter it is asserted that Aurangzib returned from Hasanabdal to Delhi on 27th March, 1676. The firm date given in the Sikh contemporary records and unbroken tradition, affirming that on Maghar *sudī*, *pancamī* Vikram Era, 1732, Aurangzib was present in Delhi when Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed was neither available to Sarkar, nor, if it were so available, he would have taken serious notice of it, in view of his poor opinion of the epiphany and history of Sikhism.

29. Khafi Khan gives two different dates of the *Satnāmī* rebellion with a difference of

two years, one from the other. At one place he mentions 1082 Hijira (p. II. 252). and at another place he mentions 1084 Hijira (P. II. 249). Sarkar has accepted 1084 Hijira as the correct date of *Satnāmī* rebellion, for reasons not explained satisfactorily, though, obviously, he must have relied upon some outside test-measure to reject the earlier and to accept the later date. If the earlier date is accepted as true, the entire edifice of the supposed assertion about Aurangzib's absence from Delhi in November, 1675 crumbles. Must'ad Khan gives the date of *Satnāmī* rebellion as 1082 Hijira, which is the year early 1673 as calculated by Sarkar (III. 338) but a Portugese contemporary authority, Ormež, tells us that, Aurangzib marched against *Satnāmīs* "as near as we can combine in April, 1674" (*Fragments*, 51). Ormež' dates agree, more nearly with Khafi Khan than with Must'ad Khan, and if this chronology is to be preferred, then Aurangzib's presence in Delhi at the end of 1675 becomes more than plausible. Dr. Fryer, another Portugese, in a letter written between September 1674 and January, 1675, tells us that, "even at this instant, he (Aurangzib) is on a project to bring them all over to his faith and has already begun by too severe taxes, very severe ones, especially on the Brahmins, making them pay a gold-rupee per head and the inferior tribes proportionately." (*A New Account of East India and Persia*, p. I. 275). But Manucci, an equally respectable contemporary authority, assures us that "In 1679 he (Aurangzib) reimposed *jezieh* in order to spread Islam and put

down infidelity" (*Storia*, p. II. 239). A difference of full four years in chronology is there. With regard to another most prominent event of Aurangzib's reign as recorded by two well educated foreign contemporary observers about the date of the return of Aurangzib from Hasanabdal to Delhi, there is similar uncertainty. Khafi Khan at one place (II. 241) says that it was during the 19th regnal year while at another place (p. II.246) he says it was the 16th regnal year, a difference of about three years. Must'ad Khan puts this date as 22nd Muharram, 1087 (p. 154), that would be early A. D. 1676. According to *Ma'asari-Alamgiri* of Must'ad Khan *jezleh* was imposed in the 23rd regnal year (p. 174) which would be 1090 Hijira or A. D. 1680 while Elliot and Dawson (p. VII. 294) give this fateful date as 1088 Hijira, two years earlier than this, and the Khafi Khan's date, while Manucci gives this date as A. D. 1679, "after the death of Raja Jaswant Singh", as he puts it.

30. Now, these are the dates and such is the chronology from which Sarkar has extracted his dating frame-work, depending on which latter our new research scholars, seek to falsify and profane the entire infrastructure of Sikh doctrine and foundations of Sikh history.

31. In opposition to this confusion of narrative and welter of historical dating, stands the firm date, clear, consistent and unassailable, that of Maghar *sudi pancami*

of the Vikram samvat 1732, when Guru Tegh Bahadur was put to death at Delhi at which metropolis Aurangzib was then present, earlier returned from his Hasanabdal expedition, in or about March, 1675. This date is recorded by Sikh contemporaries, in the blank sheets of the Sikh scripture copies, preserved and present in various parts of India to this day, frequently bearing approval-signatures of Guru Gobind Singh testifying: *sambat 1732 gurū tegbahadurji samāne vlc dilli manghar sudi 5 vīr vār pehar dīn cadeh sri satgurū kartāpurkh nīrankār.*

32. Latest and weighty historical judgement is now available that supports the version enshrined in the Sikh chronicles. *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (New Edition) published in Leiden and London (1958) after careful investigation concludes, under, *Aurangzib* :

"The Pathans rose in revolt, the Yusufzais in 1077/1667 and the Afridis in 1083/1672, but though he (Aurangzib) stationed himself at Hasanabdal (Rawalpindi District), the efforts of the imperial officers were strongly unavailing and peace could not be restored till 1085/1675" (p. 769)

33. From times immemorial, the campaigning season in India is, October to February every year and, thus, it is obvious that by the end of March, 1675, Aurangzib returned to Delhi, well in time to order and see the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur.

34. A word before we conclude, about the Mughal Persian records which so fascinate and impress our teachers and research scholars

of history, in particular, 'the history of the Sikhs written by the Sikhs' these days. Modern man's passion for history is not very old and it is a mistake to regard it as the natural behaviour of every civilised man. This interest manifests itself in two distinct ways that are inter-related.

(1) A passion for historiography, the desire for an evermore complete and more exact knowledge of the past of humanity ;

(2) The tendency to define man, as, above all, a historical being, conditioned and, in the end, created by History. What is called, 'historicism', *Historismus Storicismo*, as well as Marxism and certain Existential schools—these are the philosophies which, in one sense or other, ascribe fundamental importance to History and the 'historic moment'. This passion for history is a fairly recent passion ; it dates from the second half of the 19th century. It is true that from the time of Herodotus, the Greco-Latin man knew and cultivated the writing of history, but this was not what has come to be known as 'history' since the 19th century—to know and describe as accurately as possible, all that has come to pass in the course of time. Herodotus, like Livy, like Orosius and even historians of the Renaissance wrote history in order to preserve examples and models and pass them on for our imitation. But for the last one hundred years or so the history has no longer been the source of exemplary models ; it has become a scientific passion for exhaustive knowlege for all the adventures of mankind. This is an interest we find in no other past era. Practi-

cally all the non-European cultures are without historic consciousness and even if they have a traditional historiography, as in China or in Islamic culture, its function is always to provide models, not to describe and preserve the truth and nothing but the truth. Indian Muslim chronicles, such as *Muntikhab-ulubāb*, *Ma'asari-Ālamgīri*, *Siyyarul-mutakharīn*, in fact, all the Muslim documents of traditional historiography from Ibnī-Khaldun to Harisi of *Ibrat-nāmeḥ*, are to be appreciated in this background. Their writings are not objective attempts at gathering and grasping, as far as possible, the whole panorama of the past, in all its panapoly, but conscious and motivated endeavours to portray the absolute and final validity of a ruling, imperial and monolithic Muslim society as ordained by Allah and revealed in the *Koran*. The concern to pejorate all that is alien or hostile to this final end, establishment and preservation of a dissent-free Muslim society, and to exalt all that is helpful and conducive to it, is implicitly owned up by all these chroniclers, without scruples, without hesitation and with a sense of exultation consequent upon a meritorious deed, well done. Khafi Khan's detailed description of the accidental strangulation of a grazier-boy during the course of a children's play is intended to project forth the image and function of the king in Islamic society. Guru Tegh Bahadur was deemed as inimical and hostile to this exclusively valid and ideal society and he was, therefore, ignored in their narratives as an irritating irrelevancy. If it was deemed as in the interests of this ideal

society to create chronological confusion on the point of the presence of the emperor at Delhi at the time of the Guru's execution, all Muslim records would unhesitatingly oblige, without an exception. Sikh history, therefore, cannot be properly reconstructed by voluntarily falling into the net of these excellent Muslim chronicles of Persian records. "He who controls the past controls

the future", says George Orwell. If the Sikh teachers and writers of Sikh history have any concern for the future of their own people, let them not be privy to permit those against whom the Sikhs had to wage a bitter and prolonged struggle for sheer survival be the controllers of the Sikhs' past and future.

SYMPOSIUM ENDS